

REMARKS

This application has been carefully considered in connection with the Office Action dated April 2, 2008. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the following.

Summary of Rejections

Claims 1-17 were pending at the time of the Office Action.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Claims 1-7, 10, 12, 15, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Summary of Response

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 16 are currently amended herein.

Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, and 17 remain as originally submitted.

Claims 18-37 were previously canceled.

Remarks and Arguments are provided below.

Summary of Claims Pending

Claims 1-17 are currently pending following this response.

Applicant Initiated Interview

Applicants attempted to initiate an interview with the Examiner, but the interview was not conducted because of scheduling conflicts. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss this response prior to issuing a subsequent Office Action.

Response to Rejections

Knudson and Swanke do not provide an Enterprise Application Integration process that facilitates the integration of workflow management processes throughout an enterprise, or a software portal through which data related to a software development project can be gathered, displayed, managed, and disseminated. More particularly, Knudson and Swanke do not disclose, teach or suggest use of a software portal that facilitates project development within an enterprise, whereby the portal includes provisions for directly notifying end users about project events as they occur, using email or other messaging technologies. For example, Knudson and Swanke do not teach or suggest use of a software portal that can determine an end of a phase of the project development process, and upon completion of that phase, automatically send a message to the personnel responsible for completing the next activity in the process and inform the personnel that the next activity can begin. Furthermore, neither Knudson nor Swanke teach or suggest use of a software portal that can determine the start and end dates for the next phase in a project development process and automatically update a process schedule with the start and end dates for the next phase. Such features enable the portal to monitor the progress and also drive the activities of the project development process involved.

The pending application discloses a system and method for managing a project development process in an enterprise, and an Enterprise Development Process (EDP) portal or software tool that facilitates the integration of enterprise architectures. The EDP portal provides consistent checkpoints throughout a project development process that allow significant events in the process to occur in a predictable, scheduled manner. More particularly, the portal is a web-based software application that supports a process-based, activity-based management model of

software development by providing an organization-wide, standardized means of collecting, managing, and reporting on work flowing through the software development process. The portal enables all parties associated with a project to determine its status and allows information about a project to be documented from its inception. Thus, the disclosed EDP portal provides a common touch-point for collecting and managing project information, and a vehicle for collaboratively planning, managing, and executing a project and distributing up-to-date project information in real-time, without requiring additional post-processing or analysis.

Knudson is directed to a dynamic project management system that automatically tracks and controls project tasks in accordance with various project schedules. The project management system includes a server network and a master database. The network is configured to identify a personnel resource pool including users. The system uses a project planning tool to execute a project plan, which includes tasks to be performed by the users in accordance with certain time schedules. The network translates the project plan into the master database and generates an assignments table including a list of project tasks that are assigned to be completed by each of the users. Time sheets are periodically prepared in the master database from the assignments table and include a list of the project tasks assigned to a respective user and a time period record for recording time entries. The system feeds the actual time expended in performing the tasks back to the project plan to allow completion of the tasks in accordance with the time schedules. Notably, although Knudson is directed to a dynamic project management system, Knudson does not teach or suggest a software portal or method for project development within an enterprise, which notifies an individual with responsibility for the next phase of a project development process, upon completion of the previous phase, by automatically sending a message to the individual informing the individual that the next phase can begin, as claimed. Furthermore, Knudson does not teach or

suggest a software portal or method for project development that determines a start date and end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updates a schedule of the process with the start date and the end date for the next phase, as claimed.

Swanke is directed to a system and method for planning a design project, coordinating project resources and tools, and monitoring the project process. Swanke identifies tasks that must be finished to complete the design project based on design data, assigns task to a plurality of resources, and prioritizes the tasks based on dependency between the tasks to create a project plan. Swanke stores the project plan and the design data in a database, and automatically notifies the resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan through the use of encryption keys. Thus, Swanke controls access to the design data with the encryption keys assigned to the resources involved. Swanke also automatically monitors the work being performed on the tasks through a computerized network, and automatically notifies a project team leader of task completion status, overdue tasks, and tasks being ignored. Nevertheless, Swanke does not teach or suggest a software portal or method for project development within an enterprise, which notifies an individual with responsibility for the next phase of a project development process, upon completion of the previous phase, by automatically sending a message to the individual and informing the individual that the next phase can begin, as claimed. Furthermore, Swanke does not teach or suggest a software portal or method for project development that determines a start date and end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updates a schedule of the process with the start date and the end date for the next phase, as claimed.

These distinctions, as well as others, will be discussed in greater detail in the analyses of the pending claims that follow.

Response to Rejections under Section 112

In the Office Action dated April 2, 2008, claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Office Action asserted that the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Specifically, the Office Action states:

The claims are directed to a requirements management system, a process modeling tool and a tactical project planning and management tool. It is not clear based on the specification, page 15, lines 1-7, that the Applicant has possession of the claimed invention including the five systems recited above. As disclosed in the specification, these features may be added in the future. Further, the claims are directed to a human resources data system, a billing system. These features were not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. (Underlining added for emphasis).

Office Action dated April 2, 2008, Page 2.

Contrary to the assertions made in the Office Action, claims 2 and 3 comply with the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, because the subject matter of these claims was in the possession of the Applicants at the time this application was filed. Essentially, the Office Action incorrectly assumes that the cited “future enhancements” encompass the claimed invention.

For example, the Office Action relied on the following disclosure in the pending application (paragraph [0039]) to support the rejection of claims 2 and 3:

The system can act as a true ‘portal,’ linking in references to or data from multiple sources such as knowledge/document management systems, fiscal information systems, financial time reporting systems, and project management information systems. Future enhancements can include integration or linking into a requirements management system (such as the DOORS tool produced by Telelogic), process modeling tools (such as Corp Modeler produced by CaseWise or Ptech produced by Ptech, Inc.), or tactical project planning and management tools (such as Microsoft Project).

The Office Action asserts that the above-described “future enhancements” are features that may be added in the future, and thus, these features were not in the possession of the inventors at the time the application was filed. However, as shown above, what the pending application actually states is that these future enhancements “can include integration or linking into” a requirements management system, process modeling tools, or tactical project planning and management tools. As such, these future enhancements of “integration or linking into” a requirements management system, process modeling tools, or tactical project planning and management tools are not limitations required by the claims. Therefore, the Office Action incorrectly assumes that the above-cited “future enhancements” encompass the claimed invention, and for at least that reason, these rejections of claims 2 and 3 should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, independent claim 1 reads, in part, “gathering project related information from different sources within the enterprise.” Note that claim 1 requires “gathering” project related information from different sources within the enterprise. Dependent claim 2 incorporates these elements of claim 1 and further reads as follows:

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the sources from which project related information is gathered are selected from a group of sources comprising:
 - a human resources data system;
 - a billing system;
 - a fiscal information system;

- a financial time reporting system;
- a knowledge/document management system;
- a project management information system;
- a requirements management system;
- a process modeling tool; and
- a tactical project planning and management tool.

Note that claim 2 requires that “project related information is gathered” from the sources within the enterprise. In other words, claim 2 does not require that project related information be obtained by “integration or linking to” the sources within the enterprise. In any event, Applicants respectfully submit that one skilled in the relevant art would readily understand from reading the entire specification how the Applicants could “gather” project related information from different sources within an enterprise, such as, for example, a human resources data system, billing system, and/or financial time reporting system, at the time the application was filed.

Moreover, the Office Action incorrectly assumes that Applicants were required to actually reduce or implement the subject matter of paragraph 0039 of the pending application in order to have possession at the time the application was filed. For resource, time, budget, or other appropriate reasons, the subject matter of paragraph 0039 of the pending application may not have been actually reduced to practice at the time the application was filed. However, at the time the application was filed, Applicants possessed sufficient knowledge of how to implement the subject matter of paragraph 0039 of the pending application, and one of ordinary skill in the relevant art would have been able to do so without undue experimentation at that time.

The Office Action also asserts that claims 2 and 3 are directed to a human resources data system and a billing system, but these features were not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors had possession of the claimed invention at the time the application was filed. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Contrary to the assertion in the Office Action, one of ordinary skill in the relevant art would know that a human resources data system and a billing system (as disclosed in the original claims) are common systems within enterprises. Furthermore, as established directly above, one skilled in the relevant art would readily understand from reading the entire specification how, at the time the application was filed, the Applicants could “gather” project related information from a human resources data system or a billing system, as required by claims 2 and 3. Accordingly, for at least the reasons established above, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 complies with the enablement requirement, and request that the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, the Office Action asserted that it is not clear what is meant to be included and not included in the claims. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In this response, claims 3, 5, 7, 11, and 16 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Response to Rejections under Section 102

Claim 8:

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Knudson, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,765,140 (“Knudson”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

I. Knudson does not disclose upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin.

Claim 8 (as currently amended) recites, in part, “upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, automatically sending a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin.”

The Office Action did not address these elements of claim 8, which were added by amendment in this response. However, the Office Action addressed substantially similar elements with respect to a rejection of claim 1 (discussed in more detail below). Essentially, in that rejection, the Office Action admitted that Knudson does not teach the elements in claim 1 that are substantially similar to the above-recited elements in claim 8.

Specifically, with respect to the rejection of claim 1, the Office Action states:

Knudson et al ...does not explicitly teach determining an end of phase of the project development process; and notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin.

Office Action dated April 2, 2008, Pages 7 and 8.

Accordingly, for at least that reason, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 8 is not anticipated by Knudson and respectfully request allowance of this claim.

II. Knudson also does not disclose determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and the end date for the next phase.

Claim 8 (as currently amended) also recites, in part, “determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process; and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and the end date for the next phase.”

The Office Action did not address these elements of claim 8, which were also added by amendment in this response. However, the Office Action addressed similar elements with respect to a rejection of claim 10 (discussed in more detail below). Essentially, in that rejection, the Office Action admitted that Knudson does not teach the elements in claim 10 that are similar to the above-recited elements in claim 8.

Specifically, with respect to the rejection of claim 10, the Office Action states on Page 11, “As per claim 10, Knudson et al ...does not explicitly teach ...automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur.” Clearly, a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process are project-related events, and as admitted in the Office Action, Knudson does not disclose or teach automatically updating a schedule when such project-related events occur. Accordingly, for at least that reason and the reasons established in section I above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 8 is not anticipated by Knudson and respectfully request allowance of this claim.

Claims depending from Claim 8:

Claims 9 and 11 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Knudson. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 9 and 11 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 8 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in

sections I and II above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9 and 11 are not anticipated by Knudson and respectfully request allowance of these claims.

Claim 13:

Claim 13 was also rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Knudson. This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

Claim 13 (as currently amended) includes limitations substantially similar to the limitations discussed in sections I and II above. Namely, claim 13 recites, in part, “wherein upon the completion of a phase within the project development process, an action in the management of the progress of the project automatically sends a message to at least one individual with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin, a second action in the management of the progress of the project determines a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and a third action in the management of the progress of the project automatically updates a schedule of the project development process with the start date and the end date for the next phase.”

Therefore, for at least the reasons established above in sections I and II, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 13 is not anticipated by Knudson and respectfully request allowance of this claim.

Claims depending from Claim 13:

Claims 14 and 16 were also rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Knudson.

Dependent claims 14 and 16 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 13 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in sections I and II above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 14 and 16 are not anticipated by Knudson and respectfully request allowance of these claims.

Response to Rejections under Section 103

Claim 1:

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knudson in view of Swanke, U.S. Patent No. 7,212,987 (“Swanke”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

III. Knudson and Swanke do not teach or suggest notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin.

Claim 1 (as currently amended) recites, in part, “notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin.”

With respect to claim 1, the Office Action states (in pertinent part):

Knudson et al teaches assigning project tasks to available employees and contractors (column 2, lines 42-55) and also teaches monitoring project progress (column 7, lines 25-47), but does not explicitly teach determining an end of phase of the project development process; and notifying at least one individual with responsibility for a next phase of the project development process, upon the completion of the previous phase within the project development process, by automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in

the project development process, the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin. Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Office Action dated April 2, 2008, Pages 7 and 8.

The Office Action admits that Knudson does not teach the above-recited elements of claim 1, but it asserts that Swanke cures the deficiencies of Knudson in that regard. However, Applicants respectfully disagree with that assertion for the following reasons.

For example, the Office Action relied on the following disclosure in Swanke to read on the above-recited elements of claim 1:

The invention automatically notifies the resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan through the use of encryption keys. The invention controls access to the design data through the use of the encryption keys assigned to the resources. The invention automatically monitors work being performed on the tasks through a computerized network and automatically notifies a project team leader of task completion status, overdue tasks, and tasks being ignored, based on the monitoring. The monitoring includes observing whether a resource is actively working on a task exclusively by observing network activity of the resource. ...The invention automatically notifies the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed. The invention automatically searches for additional resources for tasks that are overdue. (Underlining added for emphasis.)

As shown above, Swanke merely teaches automatically notifying the resources that are performing the tasks of additional tasks they are to perform. Notably, Swanke distinguishes between its resources that perform the tasks, and its project team leader who is the “individual with

responsibility for a next phase of the project development process” (Bold added for emphasis), as required by claim 1. As such, as shown above, Swanke does not teach or suggest “automatically sending a message to the at least one of the individuals with responsibility for the next phase in the project development process [e.g., Swanke’s project team leader], the message informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin,” as claimed. More particularly, however, Swanke merely teaches “automatically notifying the resources of additional tasks,” but Swanke does not teach “informing the at least one individual that the next phase can begin,” which is also required by claim 1.

IV. Knudson and Swanke also do not teach or suggest determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase.

Claim 1 (as currently amended) recites, in part, “determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase.”

The Office Action did not address these elements of claim 1, which were added by amendment in this response. However, the Office Action addressed similar elements with respect to a rejection of claim 10. In that regard, as discussed above in section II, the Office Action admitted that Knudson does not teach the elements in claim 10 that are similar to the above-recited elements in claim 1.

Specifically, with respect to the rejection of claim 10, the Office Action states on Page 11, “As per claim 10, Knudson et al ...does not explicitly teach ...automatically updating a schedule when project-related events occur.” Clearly, a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process are project-related events, and as admitted in the Office Action,

Knudson does not disclose or teach automatically updating a schedule when such project-related events occur. Therefore, it follows that Knudson does not teach at least “automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase,” as recited in claim 1.

The Office Action asserts that Swanke cures the deficiencies of Knudson in this regard. However, Applicants respectfully submit that this assertion is incorrect.

For example, with respect to this aspect of the rejection of claim 10, the Office Action states:

Swanke teaches automatically notifying resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan; the automatic notification takes place notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed (column 2, lines 1-38). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the notification that a project phase can begin in the system of Knudson et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Office Action dated April 2, 2008, Page 11.

As shown above, the Office Action merely states that Swanke teaches “automatically notifying resources of ...associated due dates,” and “notifying the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed.” However, the Office Action does not describe just where or how the cited section of Swanke teaches or suggests “determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase,” as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, the above-cited section of Swanke also does not teach or suggest these elements of this claim.

Specifically, in the above-cited section (column 2, lines 1-38) in Swanke, the term “schedule” is mentioned only twice, but not in the context of the above-recited elements of claim 1. For example, in column 2, lines 14-16, Swanke discloses “The invention automatically schedules a meeting of all corresponding resources if a task becomes overdue.” Then, in column 2, lines 32-33, Swanke discloses “Changes in schedule can occur in a real time manner.” Clearly, within this disclosure, Swanke does not teach “determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase,” as claimed.

Furthermore, Swanke does not teach or suggest these elements of claim 1 anywhere else within column 2, lines 1-38. For example, in column 2, lines 2-20, Swanke discloses the following:

The invention automatically notifies the resources of corresponding task responsibilities and associated due dates based on the project plan through the use of encryption keys. The invention controls access to the design data through the use of the encryption keys assigned to the resources. The invention automatically monitors work being performed on the tasks through a computerized network and automatically notifies a project team leader of task completion status, overdue tasks, and tasks being ignored, based on the monitoring. The monitoring includes observing whether a resource is actively working on a task exclusively by observing network activity of the resource. The invention automatically schedules a meeting of all corresponding resources if a task becomes overdue. Further, the invention produces periodic status reports based on the monitoring. The invention automatically notifies the resources of additional tasks as prerequisite tasks are completed. The invention automatically searches for additional resources for tasks that are overdue.

As shown above, Swanke merely teaches notifying resources of due dates, monitoring work being performed, scheduling meetings of resources if tasks become overdue, producing periodic status reports, and the like. Clearly, in this section cited in the Office Action, Swanke

does not teach or suggest “determining a start date and an end date for the next phase in the project development process, and automatically updating a schedule of the project development process with the start date and end date for the next phase,” as recited in claim 1. Also, the Applicants assert that a careful reading of the remainder of Swanke also does not teach or suggest these elements of claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in sections III and IV above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is not taught or suggested by Knudson and Swanke and respectfully request allowance of this claim.

Claims depending from Claim 1:

Claims 2-7 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knudson in view of Swanke. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 2-7 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. As reasons established in sections I through IV above, Knudson does not teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 2-7, and Swanke does not cure the deficiencies of Knudson.

Claims Depending from Claim 8:

Claims 10 and 12 were also rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knudson in view of Swanke. These rejections are also respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 10 and 12 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 8 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. As established in sections I through IV above, Knudson

does not teach all of the elements of claim 8, and Swanke does not cure the deficiencies of Knudson.

Claims Depending from Claim 13:

Claims 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knudson in view of Swanke.

Dependent claims 15 and 17 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 13 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. As established in sections I through IV above, Knudson does not teach all of the elements of claim 13, and Swanke does not cure the deficiencies of Knudson.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in sections I through IV above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-7, 10, 12, 15, and 17 are not taught or suggested by Knudson, and Swanke does not cure the deficiencies of Knudson. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-7, 10, 12, 15, and 17 should be allowed.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending application is in condition for allowance for the reasons stated above. If the Examiner has any questions or comments or otherwise feels it would be helpful in expediting the application, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (972) 731-2288.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any further fees associated with any of the foregoing papers submitted herewith, or to credit any overpayment thereof, to Deposit Account No. 21-0765, Sprint.

Respectfully submitted,

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